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Eliminating Blight: Home Again Initiative

As of January 2003, DCRA estimated that there are approximately 2,900 vacant and abandoned properties in the city — the majority of which are small, privately owned properties. Restoring these properties could mean upwards of 700 new housing units in the city. Through the SNAP process, eleven of the city's 39 neighborhood clusters identified the reuse of vacant properties as a top priority. In response, Mayor Williams announced the Home Again Initiative.

What is the Home Again Initiative?

- Converts primarily single-family abandoned properties into quality, affordable homes by creating bundles of 5-20 properties and selling them to for-profit and non-profit developers
- Focuses on empty lots and homes with no occupants
- Targets neighborhoods that have high concentrations of vacant properties and were identified as a high priority in neighborhood SNAPs
- Ensures that new homeowners have access to pre- and post-home purchase counseling
- Sets aside 30 percent of the converted homes for low-income families

What is the benefit of converting vacant and abandoned buildings?

While vacant properties are symbols of neighborhood decline, they also represent an opportunity to:

- Increase and improve the city's housing supply
- Further the economic growth and recovery of many of the city's neighborhoods
- Encourage greater population density, which attracts quality neighborhood commercial and retail development
- Stabilize neighborhoods

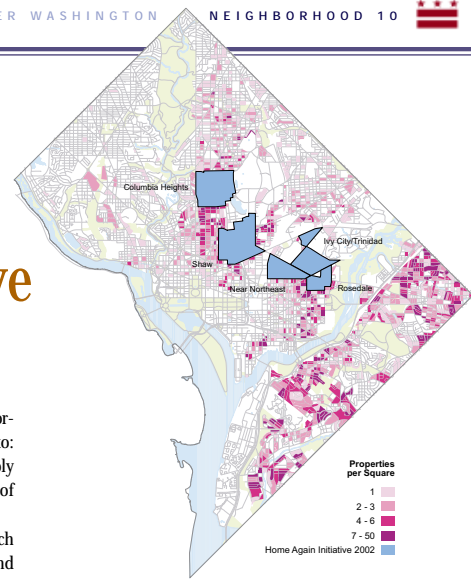
What has the city accomplished?

- Identified five of the most blighted neighborhoods in which to begin acquiring properties for the Home Again Initiative: Columbia Heights, Ivy City/Trinidad, Near Northeast, Shaw and Rosedale (there are approximately 1,500 abandoned buildings in these five neighborhoods alone)
- Dedicated \$20 million of public funding to the Home Again Initiative
- Pre-qualified 22 non-profit and for-profit developers to purchase properties
- Sold the first 45 abandoned properties to pre-

qualified developers and in the process of selling the next 20 properties

- Identified and contacted the owners of 495 vacant properties in the initial five targeted neighborhoods, which encouraged the private development or occupancy of 110 properties. The Initiative is working to acquire the remaining 385 properties.

For more information on the Home Again Initiative, visit the Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development's web site at www.dcbiz.dc.gov. To register a housing violation complaint, please contact The Housing Violation Complaint Center at (202) 442-4610.



ABOVE: Vacant, abandoned and underutilized properties provide an immediate opportunity to strengthen neighborhoods.

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Modernizing and Re-envisioning Schools



A new technology high school, designed for approximately 800 students, is the anchor for the McKinley campus.

All the District's children must have the education to go as far as their dreams and determination will take them. Our schools need to become the educational, social and recreational anchors of our neighborhoods.

How can DC Government and the DC Public Schools work together to improve our schools?

- Modernizing:** We must modernize our schools to provide the District's children with the education they require. The city will help District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) create innovative public/private partnerships to develop school facilities where school construction meets the educational goals of individual communities.
- Re-envisioning:** We must make our schools community anchors where a range of services can be accessed and utilized by all residents and community stakeholders. The city will work with DCPS to identify and place the health and

human services needs of students and their families directly in or near District schools.

What are the benefits of modernizing and re-envisioning schools?

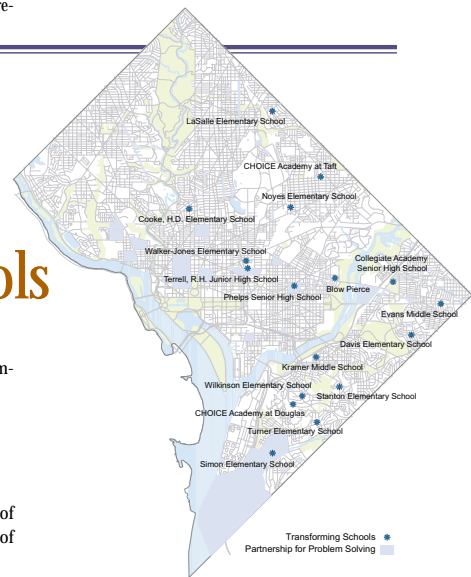
Successful schools can:

- Nurture the emotional and physical health of children and improve the general health of neighborhoods at the same time
- Bring new life to deteriorated neighborhoods by helping to retain and attract residents
- Serve as anchors of mixed-use developments that can spur revitalization efforts in surrounding areas
- Unlock the value of the city's underutilized land

What has the city accomplished?

The city is committed to making schools an integral piece of neighborhood planning and revitalization. Two examples speak to this goal:

Oyster School — The state-of-the-art James F. Oyster Bilingual Elementary School, the first new District of Columbia public school to be built in the last 20 years, was constructed at no cost to taxpayers through an innovative, community-initiated public/private development partnership. To create the school, the city deeded part of the campus to a developer, who erected a nine-story apartment building on its portion of the land and a new school on the other. The project created a solution



ABOVE: DCPS has created the Transforming Schools Initiative and CHOICE Academies in an effort to coordinate schools with agency-provided child, family and community-focused services.

that fit the unique needs and maximized the available assets of the surrounding community.

McKinley High School Campus — Construction is underway at the 23-acre McKinley campus, which sits just blocks away from the future New York Avenue Metro Station. This vacant and non-functioning property will be the location for a new joint venture between the city and DCPS. In addition to a technology high school designed for 800 students, education and business could also coexist, with private companies leasing space and providing internships and employment opportunities for students and residents.

For more information on the city's in-school services, contact the Office of the Deputy Mayor for Children, Youth, Families and Elders at (202) 727-8001.